The Soul's Journey After Death

An Abridgement of

Ibn Al-Qayyim's Kitabar-Ruh

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'Every soul will taste death.'

(Qur'an 2:185)

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INTRODUCTION

'They will ask you about the spirit. Say, "The spirit is at the behest of your Lord. You have been given only a little knowledge."'[1]

'The living go on and the dead do not.' ... Allah! What an extraordinary expression and what an even stranger position to take. When somebody dies, our sorrow and tears, our weeping and mourning soon cease. The funeral rites, the Thursday ceremony and finally the forty-day ceremony are held and then all is forgotten. We say to ourselves, 'The living go on and the dead do not,' and put the dead person out of mind on the premise that he is dead and at rest. We forget or pretend to forget that he is in fact in even greater need of us than the living. He faces the future all alone, hidden away in the domain of the earthworms, buried under the earth in a desolate grave. He was in the light and now he is in darkness. He was surrounded by beauty and spaciousness and now he is enclosed in narrowness and gloom. He was in bliss and he now is in torment.

All this, however, is measured by criteria which are completely different from those that we, the living, use. We cannot perceive these things with our eyes or our inner senses or even our ears. The dead person is completely aware of them, but according to the criteria of the Next World. What are those criteria? What is death? What is life in the Next World...the world after death? Questions, many questions come to mind.

[1] Al-Isra (17): 85

I have read more than one book on this subject, but I consider my basic source in what I say here to be the *Kitab ar-Ruh* by Ibn al- Qayyim which is based on the Qur'an, the *Sunna*, Traditions and what the greatest scholars have said. However, before reading Ibn al- Qayyim, we must first know who Ibn al-Qayyim was, and whether he is a reliable source.

I will here present some of what I have read about Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya in a magisterial thesis submitted to Azhar University by Dr. Husayni 'Ali Ridwan. In it he points out that Ibn al-Qayyim's real name was Muhammad b. Abi Bakr b. Sa'id b. Hariz az-Zar'i, and then ad-Dimashqi. His title was Shamsu'd-din, and his *kunya* was Abu 'Abdullah. How then did he come by the name Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya? His father was the director of a school called al-Jawziyya which was located in the Damascus Wheat Market and for that reason he was called "Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya" or "Ibn al-Qayyim". He is not the same as Ibn al- Qayyim al-Jawzi who died in Baghdad in 597 A.H.

Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya was born into a scholarly and virtuous family in 691 A.H./1292 A.D. At that time Damascus was a centre of literature and thought. Many schools were located there and he studied and graduated under the protection, direction and sponsorship of his father. He was particularly influenced by his Shaykh and teacher Ahmad b. Taymiyyah, and also by Ibn ash-Shirazi amongst others.

When he had reached maturity and had become a scholar of weight and reputation, he started to teach at al-Jawziyya and had many students, including Ibn Kathir. He was looked to as a model in both youth and middle-age, by reason of the fact that he went out of his way to pass on to others the knowledge he had been given by those who came before him.

From his youth onwards he was constantly striving, tireless in his examination of everything around him, brilliant. Throughout his life, he remained an example of

humility. He was calm and convivial, constant in worship, getting right to the core of the *deen*, a living example of the meaning of scrupulousness. He was courageous about stating the truth, no matter what the consequences.

I have put together all these qualities by which his personality was distinguished and the effect they must have had is clear when we look at the impact of his character on history and his unique achievement in the various fields of knowledge, literature and culture.

After memorizing the Noble Qur'an, he set about memorizing *hadith* and then turned to poetry, studying language through the different periods of poetic development. Then he immersed himself in the field of Islamic culture, paying particular attention to legal judgements. He collected books and extracted all that could be extracted from them. He took a long time over the books he wrote, taking great pains in his research and accuracy so that he would produce definitive, appropriate, coherent works for people from which nothing had been left out. For that reason people were hungry for his words and his books were widely read.

Our forbears considered him, after his teacher Ibn Taymiyyah, as the Greatest Scholar, the Shaykh of Islam and the Muslims, the Seal of the Certain, the heir of the knowledge of the *mujtahids*, the leader of the intellectual renaissance in the 8th century and the saviour of the Islamic world.

*The meaning of italicised Arabic terms can be found in the Glossary.

FROM ONE WORLD TO ANOTHER!

'Why, but when the soul reaches the throat of the dying and at that moment you are watching - and We are nearer to him than you, but you do not see Us.'[1]

When someone dies, the Angel of Death comes to take his soul, no matter where he is. The dying person sees him, hears him, and speaks to him, but not with his eyes, his ears, or his tongue. How then? I do not know exactly. All I do know is that when he begins to move to another world, he sees, hears, and speaks, by some means which we, the living, do not perceive. Many instances of this have been recorded:

Ibn Abi'd-Dunya mentions that on the day 'Umar b. 'Abdu'l-'Aziz died, he said to those with him, 'Sit with me.' When they sat down next to him, he said, 'I am the one You commanded and I failed you. You forbade me and I rebelled.' He said this three times. Then he said, 'But there is no god but Allah.' Then he lifted his head and stared. They said, 'You are looking very intently, Amir al-Mu'minin.' He replied, 'I see a presence which is neither man nor jinn.' Then he died.

Fadala b. Dinar said, 'I was with Muhammad b. Wasi' when he was very near to death. He began to say, "Welcome to my Lord's angels! There is no strength nor power except by Allah!" I smelled the sweetest fragrance that I had ever smelled. Then his eyes glazed over and he died.'

Why do I need to look so far into the past, to the days of the first Muslims? I myself was present at the moment of

[1] Al- Waqi'a (56): 83-85

someone's death in our own time. I was with my grandmother when she was dying. It was at the time of the Dawn Prayer. She was in pain and gasping for breath, moaning from the intensity of the pain but in spite of that, she kept repeating with great joy, 'Allah! Death is sweet!' and saying the *shahada* over and over for several minutes. Then it was all over. This is where our job, those of us who are still alive, begins.

After the soul is taken, if it is a pure soul and has relatives in the Next World who are people of the Garden, they come to meet the soul with yearning and great joy. They ask it about the condition of those who are still alive in this world.

The angels then bear the soul from one heaven to the next until it comes into the presence of Allah, glory be to Him and may He be exalted! Then it returns and sees the washing of the body, its shrouding, and the funeral procession. It says either, 'Take me forward! Take me forward!' or 'Where are you taking me?' The people there cannot hear this.

When the corpse has been placed in the grave, the soul inserts itself between the body and the shroud so that the questioning can take place. Then the soul hears the receding footfall of the last of the people who followed the funeral and the earth is levelled over him. The earth, however, does not prevent the angels from reaching him. Even if a stone had been hollowed out for him and he had been placed into it and the opening sealed over with lead, it still would not stop the angels from reaching him. These dense substances cannot prevent the passage of souls. They do not even stop the *jinn*. Allah - glory be to Him! - made stone and earth the same for the angels as air is for birds.

The Grave expands and stretches for the soul, and as a result for the body as well. The body is in a grave of the narrowest dimensions and yet it expands, because of the soul, as far as the eye can see.

For details and confirmation of what I have said I will quote a sound *hadith* of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. He said,

> 'When the believer is about to depart from this world and go forward into the Next World, angels with faces as bright as the sun descend from the heavens and sit around him in throngs stretching as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death comes and sits at his head and says, "Good soul, come out to forgiveness and pleasure from Allah!" Then his soul emerges like a drop of water flows from a water-skin and the angel takes hold of it. When he has grasped it, the other angels do not leave it in his hand even for the twinkling of an eye. They take it and place it in a perfumed shroud and a fragrance issues from it like the sweetest scent of musk found on the face on the earth.
>
> 'Then they bear it upwards and whenever they take it past a company of angels, they ask, "Who is this good soul?" and the angels with the soul reply, "So-and-so the son of so-and-so," using the best names by which people used to call him in this world. They bring him to the lowest heaven and ask for the gate to be opened for him. It is opened for him and angels who are near Allah from each of the heavens accompany him to the subsequent heaven until he reaches to the heaven where Allah the Great is. Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, says, 'Register the book of My slave in *'Illiyun* and take him back to earth. I created them from it and I return them to it and I will bring them forth from it again."
>
> 'His soul is then returned to his body and two angels come to him. They make him sit up and say to him, "Who is your Lord?" He replies, "My Lord is Allah." They ask him, "What is your religion?" He replies, "My religion is Islam." They ask him, "Who is this man who was sent among you?" He replies, "The Messenger of

Allah." They ask him, "How did you come to know these things?" He replies, "I read the Book of Allah, believed it, and declared it to be true." Then a Voice from on high declares, "My slave has spoken the truth, so spread out carpets from the Garden for him and open a gate of the Garden for him!" Then some of its fragrance and perfume comes to him, his grave is expanded for him as far as the eye can see, and a man with beautiful garments and a fragrant scent comes to him and says, "Rejoice in what delights you for this is the day which you were promised." He asks, "Who are you? Yours is a face which presages good." He replies, "I am your good actions." Then he says, "O Lord, let the Last Hour come soon so that I may rejoin my family and my property!"

'When an unbeliever is about to depart from this world and go forward into the Next World, angels with black faces descend from the heavens carrying rough hair- cloth and sit around him in throngs stretching as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death comes and sits at his head and says, "Foul soul, come out to the wrath and anger of Allah!" Then his soul divides up in his body and it is dragged out like a skewer is pulled out of wet wool. Then the angel takes hold of it. When

What we are at present concerned with is the third stage, the domain of the interspace between the worlds. It is the first of the stages of the Next World. In it the souls are divided into two groups: one group is punished and imprisoned, distracted by its punishment from everything else - such as visiting or meeting each other. The other group is in bliss, and it is this second group that we are concerned with here.

The liberated souls of those who are in bliss visit each other and discuss what happened in the world they have left and the people of that world. Every soul keeps company with those of his friends who acted in a similar way to him. Many people have had dreams showing this. One such dream was recorded by Salih b. Bashir who said, 'I saw 'Ata' as-Sulami in a dream after he died and said to him, "May Allah have mercy on you! You suffered for a long time in this world!" He replied, "By Allah, that has been followed by long-lasting joy and unending delight." I asked, "What is your station?" He replied, "With those whom Allah has blessed among the prophets, the sincere, the martyrs and the righteous." '

Allah the Great says, *'Whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, they are with those whom Allah has blessed, the prophets, the sincere, the martyrs, and the righteous. Very excellent companions they are!'*[2]

The souls who are in bliss enjoy this state from the moment of death. We have already made that clear in great detail and corroborated it with a sound *hadith.* When the believer is dying, the angels come to him and speak to him and he speaks to them without the people present being aware of this. The soul yearns to meet its Lord and leaves the body with ease. Then the angels bear it to the heavens and a sweet fragrance diffuses from it which is perceived by all the angels and the pure, liberated souls in the heavens. They ask each other about this sweet fragrance. His relatives and dearest friends who were with him in the world hasten to him. They advance before him to the next world, crowding

[2] An-Nisa' (4): 69

round him and asking him for news of the world and those who are in it. Then the angels take the soul up from heaven to heaven and every angel in every heaven he passes through prays for blessings on him. He is delighted by the sweetest and most beautiful good tidings. Then the soul comes to a standstill before the Almighty King, may His majesty be exalted! He says to the soul, 'Welcome to this good soul and to the body which it left.' When the Lord, the Mighty and Majestic, makes something welcome, then everything welcomes it and every constriction departs from it. Then He says, 'Show him his place in the Garden and display before him the honour and blessing I have prepared for him.' Then the angels take him back down to the earth so that he can see his body being washed and they carry on a conversation although the living cannot hear it.

The angels pray for the soul of the believer in the heavens just as people pray over his body on the earth. Finally, the body is buried and the soul returns to between the body and the shroud. This return does not imply the same connection that the soul had to the body in this world. It is not even the same connection which it had in the sleeping state nor the connection which it has when it is in its resting place. This return is a special return for the questioning as we have already clarified.

Then, as we have already mentioned, the two angels, Munkar and Nakir, come down and question him. After that a door onto the Fire is opened for him and he is told, "Look! This would have been your place in the Fire if you had rebelled against Allah and Allah had exchanged your place in the Garden for it." Then that door is locked and another door onto the Garden is opened and he sees his place there. This door will remain open until the Day of Rising. Some of the sweetness and fragrance of the Garden reaches him and his grave is made spacious. He sleeps in peace just as if he

Garden is opened for the unbeliever and he is told to look at what his place would have been in the Garden if he had obeyed Allah. Then it is locked and another door is opened and he is told to look at his place in the Fire. It stays open and the blast of hot air from it continues to reach him until the Day of Rising. Then the earth presses in on him and he is crushed to the point that his ribs split apart. Then various forms of punishment rain down on him according to the type of wrong actions he committed.

Many statements have come down to us showing us the reality of the punishment of the Grave, or what we might also call the punishment of the interspace between the two worlds. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

> 'I passed Badr and saw a man come out of the ground. Another man hit him with a stick until he vanished back into the earth. Then that happened again.'

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, went on to say,

> 'That was Abu Jahl b. Hisham who will be punished in that way until the Day of Rising.'

One of the early Muslims said, 'We passed by a certain watering-place on the way to Basra. We heard the braying of a donkey and asked the people there what the braying was. They replied that it was one of the men who used to be with them whose mother had asked him for something and he had told her to bray like a donkey. Since his death, this braying had been heard every night from his grave.'

'Amr b. Dinar said, 'The sister of one of the men of Madina died and he buried her. When he came back from the burial, he remembered that he had left something in the grave. He asked one of his companions to help him. His companion related that they had dug up the grave and found what they were looking for. Then the man said, "Let us dig further and

find out what has happened to my sister." He lifted up one of the stones covering the burial cavity and found the grave filled with fire. He replaced it and filled in the grave again. Then he returned to his mother and asked, "What was my sister really like?" She replied, "Why do you ask about her when she is dead?" He said, "Tell me." She said, "She used to delay the prayer and she also used to go to our neighbours' doors, put her ear to them and then tell other people what they said!" '

There are also the *hadiths* of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, about the Night Journey which contain descriptions of the many types of punishment he saw in the interspace between the two worlds. We will give a summary of them here.

There are those who are driven like cattle and forced to eat herbage more bitter than aloes and the bitter fruit of *zaqqum* and driven on to the hot stones of *Jahannam* because they did not purify their property by paying *zakat.* There are those who have to eat foul putrid meat because they fornicated. There are those whose lips are cut with iron scissors because they rose to speak and address people during times of civil strife. Some of them have bellies as big as houses and whenever one of them gets up, he is knocked down and says, "O Allah, do not let the Hour come!" They are in the path of the people of Pharaoh who come and trample them while they can do nothing but scream. These are people who devoured usury.

Some of them are screaming with their mouths gaping open while they devour hot coals which come out of their anuses. These are people who consumed the property of orphans. Some of them cut pieces from their own sides and eat their own flesh. They are the slanderers and those about whom the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said,

> 'We saw people cutting flesh from their sides and eating it. It was said, "As you used to consume the flesh of your brother!" I asked, "Who are they?" and I was told, "Those of your community who slandered." '

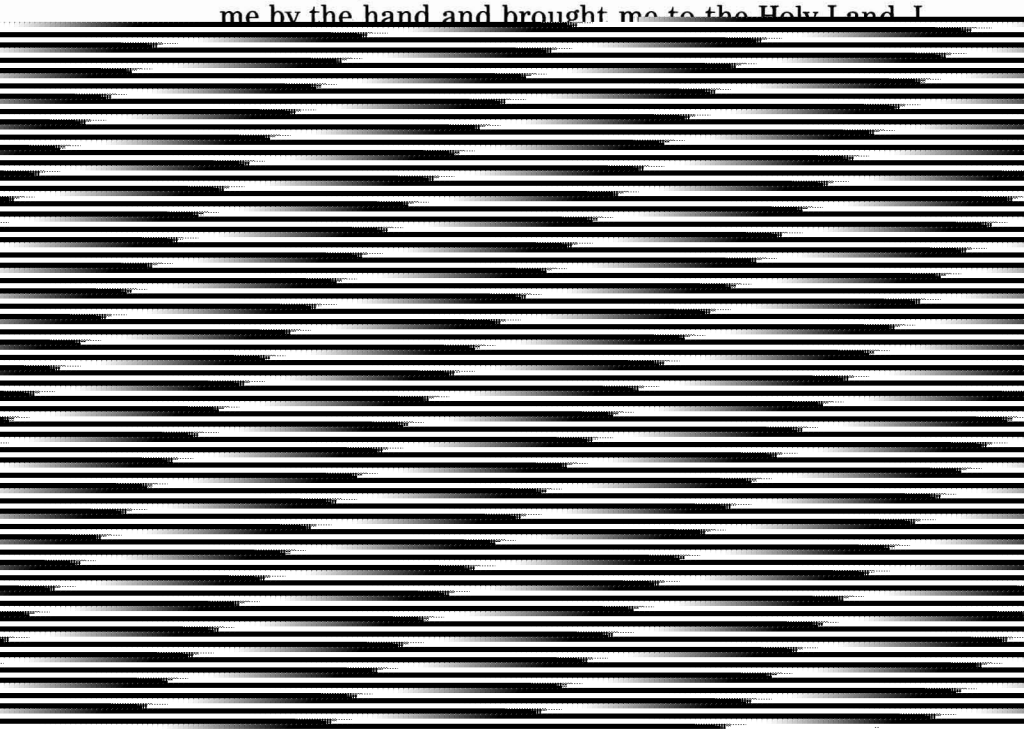
Some of them have brass nails with which they scratch their faces and chests. They are those who were backbiters and maligned people's honour.

Part of the *hadith* of the Night Journey is...

> 'Some people were cracking open their heads with a stone. Every time they did this, their heads were restored to what they were like in the first place. This went on and on without stopping. I said, "Jibril, who are they?" Jibril replied, "They are people who turned away from the prayer." '

One of the Prophet's dreams - and the dreams of the Prophets are true and a part of revelation which gets right to the heart of the matter - was related as follows. He said,

> 'Last night, I saw two men who came to me and took me by the hand and brought me to the Holy Land. I



to take his soul but his correct behaviour towards his parents came and drove the Angel of Death away from him. He saw another of the Muslims surrounded by shaytans. Then his remembrance of Allah came and made the shaytans fly from him. Then he saw a third muslim surrounded by the angels of punishment. His prayer came and rescued him from their hands. The tongue of a fourth muslim was lolling out from thirst and whenever he approached a pool of water, he was stopped and driven away. Then his fasting of Ramadan came and gave him water to drink. He saw another man and the prophets sitting in circles. Everytime the muslim approached one of the circles, he was stopped and driven away. His ghusl for janaba came, took hold of his hand, and sat him down in the circle. Another muslim had darkness in front of him, behind him, on his right, on his left and above him. He was completely lost in it. Then his hajj and 'umra came and led him out of the darkness into the light. Another muslim was being pursued by flames and sparks of fire. His sadaqa formed a veil between him and the fire and shaded his head. Another muslim was speaking to a group of believers who would not speak to him. His upholding of kinship came and told the group of believers that he had maintained ties of kinship and ordered them to speak to him. Then the believers spoke to him and shook hands with him. Another muslim was surrounded by the *Zabaniyya* (angels of *Jahannam*). His commanding the right and forbidding the wrong came and rescued him from them and put him among the angels of mercy. Another muslim was kneeling with a veil between him and Allah. His good character came, took his hand and Allah let him enter His presence. Another muslim had received his book in his left hand. His fear of Allah came and took his book and placed it in his right hand. The scales of another muslim were light in the balance. Those of his children who had died young came and made the scales level. Another muslim was standing on the brink of *Jahannam*. His hope in Allah came and rescued him from it, and he withdrew from it. Another muslim had fallen into the Fire. The tears that he had wept out of fear of

Allah came and rescued him from it. Another muslim was standing on the *Sirat* trembling like a leaf in a strong wind. His good opinion of Allah came and his terror was allayed and he was able to go on. Another muslim was crawling on the Sirat, sometimes creeping and sometimes just clinging on. His prayer came and put him on his feet and rescued him. Another muslim reached the gates of the Garden but they were locked against him. His testimony that there is no god but Allah came and opened the gates for him and let him into the Garden.

The Prophet also said regarding the *sura, al-Mulk,*

> 'This sura has thirty ayats which intercede for anyone who knows them until they receive forgiveness, *"Blessed be He in whose hand is the Kingdom."* '[2]

Among the dreams of the early muslims is one related by Yazid b. Nu'ama who said, 'A girl died in the al-Jarif plague. Her father met her in a dream after her death and asked her to tell him about the Next World. She replied, "My father, this is a big subject you have raised. We know but cannot act. You can act but do not know. By Allah, one or two acts of glorification and one or two rak'ats of the prayer in the book of my actions are preferable to me than the world and all it contains." '

The Grave has an embrace from which neither believer or unbeliever can escape. Afterwards, the believer is relieved of its pressure while the unbeliever remains in punishment. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

> 'The Grave has a pressure and if anyone were to be saved from it, it would be Sa'd b. Mu'adh.'

The wisdom of the pressure and embrace of the Grave is in what Ibn Abi'd-Dunya related from Muhammad at-Taymi. He said that the people say that the earth is their mother. They were created from it and they were away from it for a long time. Then when they return to it, it embraces them as a

[2] Al-Mulk (67): 1

mother embraces her child when it has been away for a long time and then returns to her. Whoever obeyed Allah is embraced with compassion and tenderness. Whoever disobeyed Allah is embraced with harshness because the earth is angry with him for the sake of its Lord.

When 'Abdu'l-'Aziz b. Sulayman al-'Abid died, one of his companions saw him in a dream wearing a green garment with a crown of pearls on his head. He asked him how he was and what the experience of the taste of death was like and what things were like where he was. He replied, 'Do not ask about the intensity of the grief and sorrow of death! However, Allah's mercy concealed all our faults and we encountered nothing but His bounty.'

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said,

> 'Allah has forbidden the earth to consume the bodies of the prophets.'

He also said,

> 'No-one prays for peace on me without Allah addressing my soul so that I return the greeting to him.'

He also said,

> 'Whenever any man visits the grave of his brother and sits with him, he is keeping company with him until he gets up to go.'

He taught his community to say when they visit people's graves,

> 'Peace be upon you, people who dwell here, both believers and Muslims. If Allah wills, we will join you. May Allah have mercy on those who have gone ahead and those who have stayed behind. We ask Allah for well-being for both you and us.'

WHAT CAN THE LIVING DO TO RESCUE THE DEAD PERSON FROM PUNISHMENT?

'To Allah belongs the intercession altogether. To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth.'[1]

We will refer back to the first sentence in the first section: 'The living go on and the dead do not.'

A man is living in our midst. Suddenly death snatches him from us. We wail and wear black. We set up the funeral tents and so forth. In short, we do what is necessary. Then we forget him on the premise that 'The living go on and the dead do not.' Or else we continue to remember him and abandon ourselves to our grief, living a life of constant anguish, claiming to be faithful to the dead. So our life is spent either in forgetfulness or grief. However, life is short. There is no time in it for either forgetfulness or grief. Real life does not consist of forgetfulness. Real fidelity is not to persist in grief.

Let us consider together how we can help the dead person who has left us. How can we support him in that severe trial? He is in fact in greater need of us than the living. He is now alone, buried in a grave inside the earth. The possibility of action is now finished for him. His subterfuges have come to an end. However, the benefit he can derive from actions which the living perform on his behalf have not come to an end, provided that Allah gives permission, since Allah said in His Mighty Book, '*Who will intercede with Him except by His permission*?'[2]

[1] Az-Zumar (39): 44

[2] Al-Baqara (2): 255

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said,

> 'When a man dies, his actions cease except for three things: a sadaqa which goes on, knowledge which continues to benefit people or a righteous son who makes supplication for him.'

There are many things which the living can do to rescue the dead. They include supplication for them, asking forgiveness for them, acts of generosity, *hajj*, fasting and other sorts of worship. These can be attributed to the dead person with Allah's permission.

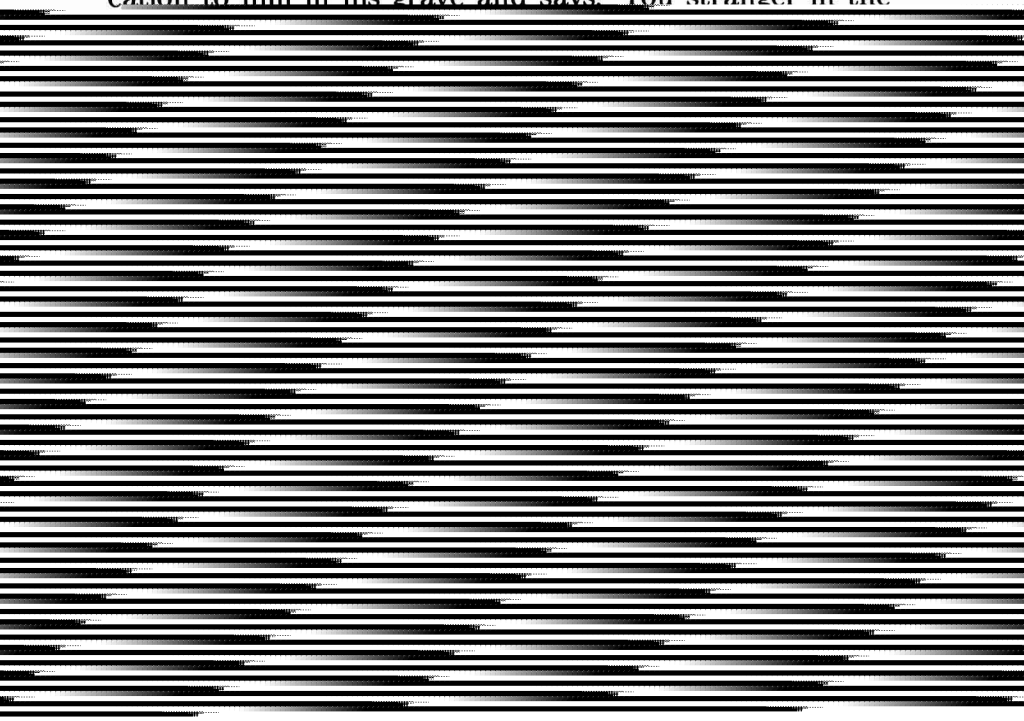
Even more important than all these is to settle the dead person's debts, whether that debt be financial or spiritual - debts to other living persons or debts of worship owed to Allah the Great.

When someone who is alive intercedes for a dead person who is being punished, his punishment is halted, even if only for a time. When he intercedes for the person enjoying bliss, that person is raised a degree.

Ibn Abi'd-Dunya mentioned that one of his companions said, 'My brother died and I saw him in a dream. I said, "How was it when you were placed in your grave?" He replied, "Someone brought me a fiery flame and if it had not been that someone else made supplication for me, I think he would have hit me with it." '

Bashar b. Ghalib said, 'I saw Rabi'a, on whose behalf I used to make frequent supplication, in a dream. She said to me, "Bashar b. Ghalib! Your gifts have been brought to me on plates of light, covered in silken cloths." I asked, "How can that be?" She replied, "That is what the supplication of living believers is like. When they make supplication for a dead person, that supplication is answered for them on plates of light, veiled in silken cloths. Then they are brought to the dead person for whom the supplication was said and they are told, 'This is the gift of so-and-so to you.' " '

'Amr b. Jarir said that when one of Allah's servants supplicates for his dead brother, an angel takes this supplication to him in his grave and says, "You stranger in the



We could go on and on. Discussion about the soul, the dead and the Next World is unending. It is a subject which has been thoroughly studied for hundreds of years. In spite of that, we still have not plumbed its depths. We have only skimmed the surface of real knowledge of it. Only Allah - glory be to Him and may He be exalted! - has complete knowledge of it.

Whoever says, 'I know', is ignorant. I have discovered from my own experience that whenever someone increases in knowledge, they discover how much greater their ignorance is.

The words of Allah are true when He says, *'They will ask you about the spirit. Say, 'The spirit is at the behest of your Lord. You have been given but little knowledge.'* "[5]

[5] Al-Isra' (17): 85

GLOSSARY

Ayat	A verse of the Noble Qur'an.
Dajjal	The false Messiah whose appearance marks the imminent end of the world.
Deen	The religion of Islam, stressing its all-inclusive nature.
Hadith	A report of what the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, said, did, or allowed to be done.
Hajj	The annual pilgrimage to Makka and the rites connected with it.
'Illiyun	One of the highest levels of paradise.
Jahannam	A general name for Hellfire.
Jibril	The Archangel Gabriel.
Jihad	Struggle, particularly warfare to defend and establish Islam.
Jinn	Unseen beings who co-habit the earth together with mankind.
Kunya	Cognomen used with both affection and respect.
Mika'il	The Archangel Michael.
Mujtahid	Scholar who is qualified to the extent of being able to make new precedents in the implementation of Islamic law.

Sadaqa	Voluntary charity given to gain Divine pleasure.
Shahada	The testimony that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.
Shaytan	Satan, the Devil.
Sijjin	One of the depths of Hellfire.
Sirat	A path, particularly the narrow bridge that passes over Hellfire, which all those destined to enter Paradise must cross.
Sunna	The practice of the Messenger of Allah and what he approved for his Companions.
Sura	A chapter of the Qur'an.
Tashahhud	What is said in the sitting position in the final part of the prayer.
Tawhid	The doctrine of the Divine Unity.
'Umra	A visit to Makka combined with certain prescribed rites.
Zakat	Wealth tax payable yearly as a religious duty.
Zaqqum	A tree in Hellfire, bearing fruit of extreme bitterness.